

Remarks

In the final Office action mailed June 16, 2005, claims 1 and 6 were objected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by the admitted prior art shown in Fig. 2 of the application. Claims 2-5 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but were indicated to be otherwise allowable if rewritten into independent form. Claim 7 was allowed.

At this time, applicants rewrite claims 2 and 4 into independent form, with all of the limitations of the independent base claim 1. Claims 3 and 5 are dependent upon the now independent claims 2 and 4, respectively. This should put claims 2-5 in condition for allowance. Claim 6 is made dependent upon claim 2. Entry of this amendment is requested.

With respect to claim 1, applicants' rebuttal argument in the response to the previous office action was based essentially on the fact that equating the prior art pull-down transistor 33 (Fig. 2) with the much weaker maintaining transistor 27 of the present invention (Fig. 1) is in error, and that the switching function is instead performed by the pull-down transistor 17 in the present invention. Applicants continue to stand by that assertion. The conventional graphical symbols in the figures cannot convey the differences in transistor strength and function. Nevertheless, in view of the Examiner's comments (item 5) in the present action, applicants have reassessed whether or not the prior art structures of Fig. 2 also contains a "switching means" within the meaning of claim 1, as asserted in the Office action, even though transistor 33 is connected differently than the switching transistor 17, and agrees that it does. Applicants' previous arguments are better directed to the patentability of the allowable claims 2-5 instead. The cited prior art does not contain a switching means of the type specified in claim 4 or coupled according to claim 4, nor does

it contain both switching means and maintaining means within the meaning of the claim 2. Accordingly, applicants cancel claim 1, putting the application in condition for allowance.

Conclusion

Applicants request reconsideration of the claims in view of the amendments and remarks made herein. A Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

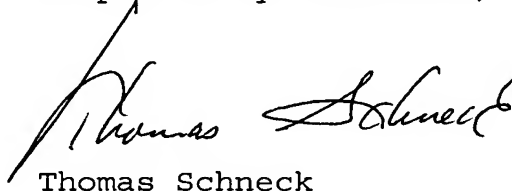
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Respectfully submitted,


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